Attachment C

The State of Montana's Electronic Mail Policy (E-Mail)

Electronic Mail (E-Mail)

Established for: State of Montana Information Technology Enterprise

SCOPE

This policy applies to all state employees and state contractors using a state computer.

PURPOSE

The State provided electronic mail (E-Mail) system is to be used for: the conduct of state and local government business and delivery of government services; transmitting and sharing of information among governmental, research, and educational organizations; supporting open research and education in and between national and international research and instructional institutions; communicating and exchanging professional information; encouraging debate of issues in a specific field of expertise; applying for or administering grants or contracts; announcing requests for proposals and bids; announcing new services for use in research or instruction; and conducting other appropriate State business.

State employees are required to use the state provided E-Mail system for state business purposes unless they do not have a direct connection to SummitNet. Qualifying employee's use of an external E-Mail system must be approved by ITSD. Employees must use standard naming conventions for their E-Mail address when using an external E-Mail system.

All messages created, sent or retrieved, over the state's systems are the property of the State of Montana. Privacy of E-Mail is not guaranteed. Employees should not have expectations of privacy for any messages. Agency System Administrators, management, and Department of Administration personnel can monitor E-Mail for performance, troubleshooting purposes, or if abuses are suspected. Employees should use their best judgment in sending confidential messages over the E-Mail system. The use of encryption should be considered when sending these types of messages.

Employees will attend E-Mail training. For additional help with using E-Mail, the System Administrator should be contacted.

Stationery may be used when it enhances the business content of E-Mail. Stationery, moving graphics and/or audio objects should not be used unnecessarily since they consume more resources such as disk space, network bandwidth and tend to detract from the message content.

Unsolicited E-Mail, or Spam, should be reported to the Information Technology Security Office in ITSD and then deleted. ITSD may block E-Mail from specified domains, from specific E-Mail addresses, or E-Mail that contains specific information in its subject line. These filters may be put into place because of their affect on the state's E-Mail system or computer network. E-Mail blocks will affect all users on the state's E-Mail system and must be approved by the CIO and reported to the SummitNet Executive Council.

MISUSE OF E-MAIL

The following items represent, but are not restricted to, misuse of state E-Mail resources:

- Circulating chain letters
- Using the state E-Mail system for: 1) "for-profit" activities, 2) "non-profit" or public, professional or service organization activities that aren't related to an employee's job duties, or 3) for extensive use for private, recreational, or personal activities.
- Statewide distributions of E-Mail. The system administrator should be contacted for correct procedures for large E-Mail distributions.
- Using personal E-Mail accounts, such as hotmail, outside of the state provided E-Mail system unless an exception has been granted.
- Other misuse activities as referenced in policy ENT-SEC-081 User Responsibilities.

Background - **History on the creation of or changes to this policy**

This policy was originally created by the NetWare Managers Group Policy Committee. It was then modified to accommodate the migration to Microsoft Exchange. The policy was modified in October 2002 to address employee use of E-Mail systems other than Microsoft Exchange and to address Spam. These modifications were reviewed with the SummitNet Executive Council prior to adoption.

Guidelines - **Recommendations, not requirements**

Employees should check their mail with a frequency appropriate to their job duties and their departmental policy. If employees are unable to check their mail for an extended period of time, they should use the "auto reply" feature or make arrangements to have their mail picked up by someone else (supervisor, secretary, coworker) and reviewed to see if messages need a response.

If employees have a personal mailing list they feel would benefit the agency, they are encouraged to inform their System Administrator for the possibility of creating a public mailing list. Employees should use care and discretion when sending E-Mail to mailing lists and/or large groups. Sending a large file to multiple recipients could severely impact the network.

The chance of receiving a virus increases with the use of E-Mail. Many viruses come embedded in attachments. Suspicious E-Mail messages should be forwarded to the State Information Security Manager for investigation before they are opened.

Employees should make judicious use of the features that increase E-Mail traffic and should strive to keep message and attachment sizes as small as possible. Use of graphics in auto-signatures or other parts of messages or attachments should be avoided because they greatly increase the size of a message. Use of the E-Mail text editor for simple messaging tasks is preferred since the same message created in a word processor is much larger. All attachments over one megabyte should be compressed (zipped) prior to sending.

All entities that use the state's network that are not included within the scope of this policy are encouraged to adopt a similar policy.

Communications sent or received by the E-Mail system may be "documents" under Article II, Section 9 of the Montana Constitution or public records under Section 2-6-101, MCA, and should be generated and maintained accordingly. Employees should delete items from their in-tray and out-tray when they are no longer needed. If a mail item needs to be retained, it should be moved to an archive folder, a disk, or be printed. Items placed in an employee's archive are the employee's responsibility. The need for retention of an item should be reevaluated after it has been stored for 6 months. Employees can contact the State Records Manager with any questions on retention schedules.

In drafting and sending E-Mail messages, employees should not include anything they are not prepared for the public to read. Statements can potentially become a basis for litigation (e.g. sexual harassment comments) and/or civil or criminal liability. E-Mail communication should resemble typical professional and respectful business correspondence.